

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8817

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRETORIA 3883

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJ: TRAINING OF BLACK WORKERS IN WHITE AREAS

1. ON OCTOBER 23, MINISTER BOTHA (BANTU ADMIN AND BANTU EDUCATION) ANNOUNCED SAG DECISION RE TRAINING OF BLACK WORKERS IN WHITE AREAS "FOR THOSE WORK CATEGORIES RELEASED TO THE BANTU BY FORMAL AGREEMENT". ALTHOUGH BASIC RESPONSIBILITY ASSIGNED TO PRIVATE INDUSTRY, SAG HAS DECIDED TO MAKE "POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION" THROUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF:

(A) EIGHT "INDUSTRIAL MANUAL TRAINING CENTERS" IN BLACK RESIDENTIAL AREAS AS PART OF SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM (INITIAL COST R2 MILLION WITH RUNNING EXPENSES TO BE PAID BY DEPT OF BANTU EDUCATION); AND,

(B) EIGHT "PRIVATE INDUSTRIAL TRAINING CENTERS" IN INDUSTRIAL COMPLEXES IN WHITE AREAS TO SERVE INDUSTRIALISTS WITH COMMON TRAINING NEEDS (INITIAL COST R1.2 MILLION WITH OPERATING COSTS TO BE COVERED BY INDUSTRIES CONCERNED).

IN ADDITION, SAG HAS APPROVED TAX CONCESSION SCHEME TO PARTIALLY DEFRAY TRAINING COSTS INCURRED BY INDUSTRIALISTS. A STANDING COMMISSION INCLUDING INDUSTRIAL REPS WILL BE MADE RESPONSIBLE

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FOR IMPLEMENTING APPROVED RECOMMENDATIONS. EMBASSY POUCHING

COMPLETE TEXT OF BOTHA STATEMENT.

2. POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT ACTION THIS AREA PRESAGED IN MINFIN BUDGET SPEECH IN MARCH ANNOUNCING FORMATION OF INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE (VAN ZYL COMMITTEE) TO STUDY "DESIRABILITY AND PRACTICAL FEASIBILITY OF A SYSTEM OF PRE-TRAINING AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF BANTU WORKERS IN WHITE AREAS". RESULTS OF STUDY AND SAG DECISION THEREON HAVE BEEN ANXIOUSLY AWAITED BY PRIVATE INDUSTRY WHO INCREASINGLY FACED WITH PROBLEM OF SHORTAGE OF SKILLED LABOR. THEIR REACTION TO PROGRAM AS ANNOUNCED WILL PROBABLY BE FAVORABLE BUT WILL ALSO DEPEND UPON SPEED WITH WHICH IT IS TO BE IMPLEMENTED.

3. IN RESPONSE TO EARLIER REPORTS THAT TRAINING PROGRAM MIGHT BE ATTACHED TO SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM, SOME BLACK EDUCATORS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT NET EFFECT WOULD BE TO REDUCE ACADEMIC QUALITY AT THAT LEVEL. PROGRAM SUGGESTED IN MINISTER'S STATEMENT WOULD IN FACT INSERT TECHNICAL TRAINING INTO SECONDARY CURRICULUM THOUGH IT NOT CLEAR THAT DEGREE WOULD MAKE REAL QUALITATIVE DIFFERENCE. AGAIN, MUCH WILL DEPEND ON IMPLEMENTATION.

4. PROBABLY AS SOP TO WHITE WORKERS, PROGRAM EXPLICITLY CONFINES ITSELF TO "WORK CATEGORIES RELEASED TO BANTU BY FORMAL AGREEMENT". THIS FINESSES WHOLE AREA OF JOB RESERVATIONS, APPRENTICE SYSTME, ETC., LEAVING A THRONY AREA FOR GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY STILL TO RESOLVE.
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